



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CLICK ON THE STORY YOU WANT TO READ

[Supporting Black Families' Fertility Journeys](#)

[The Benefits of Routine Cancer Screenings](#)

[Eating Your Way to a Happy Heart](#)

[Attend an Upcoming Webinar](#)



SUPPORTING BLACK FAMILIES' FERTILITY JOURNEYS

ADVOCACY, ACCESS, AND CARE WITH MAVEN

Navigating fertility and family-building can be complex, especially for Black individuals facing disparities in access to reproductive health technologies and support systems. Maven recognizes the need for intentional support tailored to the unique challenges Black families encounter in their fertility journeys. Looking at the social factors that affect health, like money and education, shows that different racial groups have unequal access to reproductive health treatments such as IVF and ways to start families, like surrogacy. Black women, in comparison to white women, are:

- [Twice](#) as likely to experience infertility
- [Less likely](#) to be treated for infertility
- Have [less success](#) after the use of fertility technologies.

Maven is deliberate in their support because it acknowledges that healthcare historically hasn't prioritized the needs of Black and Brown families. Recent data shows that [22%](#) of Black women receive lower- quality care. Many [studies](#) have shown that Black and Brown women are disproportionately affected by infertility and are more likely to experience reproductive health disorders such as [fibroids](#) and [endometriosis](#). For Black women, early and accurate diagnosis and treatment for these conditions is essential. While some health systems and medical schools are implementing racial education training, Black women still face persistent barriers to access that make it necessary for them to advocate for themselves.

HOW BLACK WOMEN CAN ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES WHEN STARTING A FAMILY

[Qef Johnson](#), a Maven birth and postpartum doula trained in fertility support and childbirth education, answered three common questions regarding Maven and how they support Black families.

1. **What is the cultural conversation about fertility in the Black community?** Fertility issues, which are [very prevalent](#) in the Black community, come from a lot of different factors. These include stress, [systemic racism in healthcare](#), and environmental factors, like hair products that could affect hormone levels. I also see a lot of Black women disproportionately dealing with conditions like fibroids and [Polycystic Ovary Syndrome \(PCOS\)](#). But in the Black community, it's hard to talk about fertility, and Black women often don't get the assistance and support they need from providers for these issues.
2. **What does self-advocacy look like for Black women and families?** Throughout fertility and family building, Black women need to [advocate](#) for themselves by being assertive and educating themselves. One of my main tips is to make a list of your needs and have it written down so you can

easily reference it. If something feels wrong, over-explain and over-share how you feel, especially if you're in pain or unhappy. Sometimes you have to gather your strength to advocate for your needs, no matter what judgment you face.

- 3. How does Maven support Black women and families?** The huge gap I see in traditional healthcare is the lack of access to specialty care. Maven provides easy access to a diverse virtual network of doulas, childbirth educators, and other specialized providers for no additional cost. Maven also prioritizes care matching, so members can meet with providers and Care Advocates who understand and share their backgrounds. Black women and families deserve great care, just like everyone else.

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CARE MATCHING?

Research indicates that care matching, or matching members with providers of the same race, ethnicity, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation, can have a positive impact on a patient's care journey and health outcomes. [When you join Maven](#), you are paired with a Care Advocate who will build a custom Care Team, provide vetted referrals, and personalize your experience to meet your needs. During your introduction call with your Care Advocate, let them know about your specific care needs, and if you are interested in providers who share your background.

Maven works every day to fill the gaps in the traditional healthcare system. Through the Maven app, members have access to 24/7, free, virtual care with doctors and coaches in over 35 specialties that support fertility and pregnancy. You'll also find classes in everything from breastfeeding to navigating IVF, and community resources to connect with others going through similar experiences. Join Maven today to start receiving the support you deserve.

JOIN MAVEN TODAY



THE BENEFITS OF ROUTINE CANCER SCREENINGS

ENHANCING PREVENTION WITH CANCERBRIDGE

According to the [American Cancer Society](#), approximately 42% of newly diagnosed cancers in the U.S. can be attributed to modifiable risk factors, suggesting that about 805,600 cases in 2022 were potentially preventable. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant implications for preventive healthcare, particularly in cancer detection and screening. [The National Cancer Institute](#) reports a concerning trend of decreased utilization of recommended cancer screening tests during the pandemic, raising concerns about missed opportunities for early cancer detection.

Prevention is paramount in the battle against cancer, and regular screenings play a crucial role in saving lives. Early detection through screenings is key for several types of cancers, such as breast, cervical, colorectal, and lung cancers. CancerBridge, our confidential navigation service, offers personalized assistance in understanding suitable screenings based on individual factors like age, lifestyle, and medical and family history. It also provides guidance on establishing a routine screening schedule. You can also access United Healthcare's preventive care checklist at [uhc.com](#).

Reducing the toll of cancer, including its physical, emotional, and financial effects, depends on managing risk factors and catching it early. ThriveOn emphasizes addressing modifiable risk factors like smoking, obesity, and poor nutrition through lifestyle changes. As members of the Franklin County Cooperative, you have access to various [resources](#) promoting a healthy lifestyle, such as tobacco cessation, nutrition counseling, gym reimbursements, and online fitness classes. By utilizing these resources, you can proactively reduce your cancer risk and earn incentives through the Wellness Your Way program for completing routine screenings.

To learn more about how CancerBridge can help go to [bewell.franklincountyohio.gov/Programs/CancerBridge](#) or attend an [upcoming webinar](#). To learn more about the Wellness Your Way incentives and how you can earn up to \$200 in Well-Being Activity incentives go to [fccThriveOn.com](#).



Maddie's Culinary Commentary

Provided by OhioHealth

February 2024

Eating Your Way to a Happy Heart!

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, but is largely preventable by a few simple lifestyle changes. Here are 3 things you can do this American Heart Month to protect your heart!

- 1. Maintain a healthy blood pressure-** Limit sodium to <2300 mg/day by seasoning generously with other flavorful ingredients like garlic, herbs, or citrus. You can also purchase “no salt added” canned goods. Learn more at www.heart.org
- 2. Keep clear arteries-** Reduce your saturated fat intake by choosing lean proteins like chicken, turkey, or fish more than red meats. Getting plenty of fiber from oats, apples, and beans will also help keep arteries clear!
- 3. Drink Responsibly-** The recommendation is no more than 2 drinks/day for men and 1/day for women. Alcohol can increase blood pressure and heavy drinking may lead to further heart complications. If you choose to drink, make sure to do so in moderation.

Upcoming ThriveOn Programs:

- **Back to Basics: Nutrition Fundamentals Healthy Lifestyle Program**
 - Tuesdays, March 5-26 from 12-12:30PM
 - Register [here](#)
- **Beating Burnout On-Demand Workshop**
 - Now LIVE on the portal
 - Click [here to participate](#)

February Recipe

[Triple Berry Protein Smoothie](#)



Maddie Bidwell, RD, LD
 Wellness Consultant
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 614-566-0183

Schedule a nutrition counseling session with Maddie by visiting [this link](#).



ATTEND AN UPCOMING WEBINAR

Join us every month for a series of engaging educational webinars brought to you by Franklin County Cooperative and ThriveOn, featuring a diverse range of topics including nutrition, financial support, health-related discussions, and much more from our trusted vendors.



CancerBridge 2024 Self Care Series: Creating Space for Self-Care

Thursday, February 22 at 11am

Define "self-care" for yourself and explore ways to create more time and energy for the things that replenish and sustain you.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

Maven Maven Moments: Self-advocacy throughout your reproductive health journey

Tuesday, February 27 at 12pm

Join our Maven expert as we explore empowering strategies to navigate the intricacies of reproductive wellbeing. From informed decision-making to assertive communication, discover the keys to taking charge of your health narrative.

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

WeightWatchers Momentum: The secret to maintaining your healthy habits

Thursday, February 29 at 1pm

This webinar will introduce a new way to think about making changes: rather than relying on motivation, we should focus on building momentum. Join WeightWatchers to learn more!

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

FEBRUARY WEBINARS

Phone: 614-525-3948

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ThriveOn
Your Health and Wellness Program